CALL FOR TENDERS

Travel and Accommodation Management Services

E-RIHS ERIC – Document ID: E-RIHS_RFQ-2026-01

Contracting Authority	European Research Infrastructure for Heritage Science (E-RIHS ERIC), via delle Cascine 35, 50144 Florence, Italy
Subject	Provision of travel and accommodation management services
Estimated Contract Value	EUR 152,000.00 (VAT excluded) for a period of one year
Procurement Procedure	Request for Quotation – Art. 22, E-RIHS ERIC Procurement Rules (E-RIHS_GA1-15), https://www.e-rihs.eu/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/E-RIHS_GA1-15-Procuremet-Rules.pdf
Submission Deadline	Sep 1 2026, 17:00 CET to admin@e-rihs.eu
Submission Address	with subject: RFQ-2026-01 – Travel Management Services

1. CONTEXT AND PURPOSE

E-RIHS ERIC (European Research Infrastructure for Heritage Science) is an international organisation established by Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2025/709 of 28 March 2025. Its Central Hub is located in Florence, Italy.

E-RIHS ERIC seeks the support of a travel management agency to organise and manage travel and accommodation arrangements in connection with its institutional activities. These include: the implementation of research access projects selected through competitive peer-reviewed E-RIHS Access Calls; the organisation of and participation in statutory board meetings, workshops, conferences, and project-related events; and other institutional travel as authorised by the Director General.

The selected contractor shall support E-RIHS ERIC in ensuring that travel arrangements are cost-effective, operationally efficient, environmentally responsible and compliant with E-RIHS ERIC financial and procurement rules.

2. AUTHORISED USERS

The travel requests shall be submitted exclusively by persons holding a prior written authorisation issued by the Director General or the Central Hub administration in case of Access Users. Authorised users are researchers supported under E-RIHS Access projects and E-RIHS ERIC employers.

The Central Hub administration shall be in copy to the contractor at the time of each booking request. The contractor shall not proceed with bookings in the absence of a valid authorisation reference.

3. SCOPE OF SERVICES

The contractor shall provide, at minimum:

- Booking of transport (air, rail, or other appropriate means) and accommodation;
- Direct interaction with authorized users for the collection of travel needs and confirmation of itineraries;
- Management of changes, cancellations, and urgent travel modifications;
- Access to travel insurance products covering at minimum trip cancellation, baggage, and medical emergencies for international travel;
- Centralized, itemized invoicing compliant with E-RIHS ERIC financial requirements, including full traceability per trip and per funding source when requested.

Tenders are also invited to describe any additional services available as part of their offer, such as visa advisory support, 24/7 traveller assistance, group event coordination, online booking tools, or sustainability reporting. These will be considered positively in the evaluation.

4. TRAVEL POLICY COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

The contractor shall ensure that all travel arrangements respect the following principles:

- Cost-effectiveness. Travel solutions proposed shall prioritize the most cost-effective option while ensuring safety, operational feasibility and mission requirements.
- Environmental sustainability. Whenever feasible, travel options with lower environmental impact shall be prioritized, taking into account journey duration, cost and user safety.
- Transport class rules. Air travel shall normally be booked in economy class. Higher classes may only be authorized where demonstrably more cost-effective or operationally justified.
- Accommodation management. Three-star category hotels or equivalent as standard. Whenever possible, accommodation should be booked through negotiated or preferred local providers when available and cost-effective. Where relevant, E-RIHS ERIC may provide lists of accommodation options located near partner facilities to support efficient travel planning and user logistics.

The contractor shall systematically propose cost-effective options consistent with the operational requirements of each trip.

5. BOOKING PLANNING

The contractor shall support booking processes aligned with operational planning requirements.

Travel requests are normally expected to be processed at least three weeks in advance of travel whenever operationally possible.

The contractor shall nevertheless ensure operational capability to manage urgent or last-minute travel requests when required by E-RIHS ERIC.

6. CHANGES, CANCELLATIONS AND LIABILITY MANAGEMENT

- The contractor shall clearly identify and communicate costs associated with voluntary changes requested by travelers.
- Costs associated with cancellations not attributable to E-RIHS ERIC operational decisions.
- The contractor shall provide full cost transparency before confirmation of booking modifications whenever feasible.

7. DOCUMENTATION AND FINANCIAL COMPLIANCE

The contractor shall ensure that:

- All invoices are itemized and include clear identification of service components.
- All financial documents are suitable for accounting and audit purposes.
- Proof of payment and fiscal documentation shall be provided where required for audit or reporting purposes.

8. ACCESSIBILITY, HEALTH AND SPECIAL CASES

The contractor shall be able to support reasonable travel adjustments required for health, disability or other justified special circumstances, in coordination with E-RIHS ERIC

9. ESTIMATED VOLUME

The following parameters are indicative and do not constitute a commitment to any minimum volume:

Contract duration	One (1) year from contract signature, with a possible extension
Estimated total value	EUR 152,000.00 (VAT excluded) over the full contract period
Estimated trips	Approximately 150 per year
Typical routes	Primarily within Europe; limited intercontinental travel on an exceptional basis

Group events	1–3 multi-participant events per year may require coordinated bookings

The financial evaluation of offers shall be based on the overall cost structure and average cost per trip across the total travel portfolio, rather than a fixed ceiling per individual trip.

For indicative purposes, the expected average cost per trip is approximately EUR 1,100.00 calculated across the full set of travel services.

The majority of trips are expected to take place within Europe, including domestic travel within a single country. On an exceptional basis, a limited number of trips may take place outside the European continent.

Travel related to E-RIHS workshops, meetings or events may follow different cost structures depending on operational and organisational requirements.

The estimated total contract value shall be calculated based on the expected overall volume of travel services.

10. OFFER CONTENT

Offers shall include:

1) An introductory description of the services offered and the service methodology;
2) A financial proposal, including:
    a) agency service fees;
    b) response time;
    c) languages spoken;
3) Company profile, including:
    a) number of contracts signed;
    b) number of agency employees;
    c) overall performance;
    d) management capability, including the resolution of issues at no additional cost;
4) A signed declaration confirming the absence of exclusion grounds as defined in Art. 26 of the E-RIHS ERIC Procurement Rules.

Offers shall be submitted in English or Italian. Documents in other languages shall include a courtesy English translation of key elements.

11. AWARD AND SELECTION

The contract will be awarded on the basis of the best-value for money principle, in accordance with the award criteria set out in the *E-RIHS ERIC Rules on Procurement Procedures and Criteria* (Art. 30). The evaluation will also consider the overall quality and competitiveness of the offer.

13. PROCEDURE AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This procurement is conducted pursuant to Art. 22 of the E-RIHS ERIC Rules on Procurement Procedures and Criteria (E-RIHS_GA1-15, approved 27 May 2025). At least three quotations will be sought and evaluated. However, where the number of suppliers meeting the selection criteria

is below the minimum number, E-RISH ERIC may continue the procedure with those suppliers only.

As an international organisation established under Council Regulation (EC) No 723/2009, E-RIHS ERIC is not subject to EU public procurement directives. Procurement is governed exclusively by its own Procurement Rules, based on the principles of transparency, equal treatment, and best value for money.

E-RIHS ERIC reserves the right to cancel this procedure at any stage without liability to any bidder.

14. SUBMISSION AND CONTACT

Offers must be submitted by email to admin@e-rihs.eu with the subject line: RFQ-2026-01 – Travel Management Services, no later than **Sep 1st 2026 at 17:00 CET**.

Questions may be submitted to the same address by no later than Sep 1st 2026. Clarifications of general interest will be communicated to all invited tenders.

15. CANCELLATION OF THE CALL PROCEDURE

In the event of cancellation of the Call procedure, tenders will be notified of the cancellation by the E-RIHS ERIC, pursuant to art. 31.

Pursuant art. 32, the Organization may decide to cancel a procurement procedure at any time before entering a contract, provided that such decision is in conformity with the principles set out in art. 3 of E-RIHS ERIC Rules on Procurement Procedure and Criteria.

Dr. Vania Virgili
E-RIHS ERIC Director General

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04.08.2026
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